



Investigating ESL/EFL students' approaches in response to revision processes: A case study

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Abstract

The issues surrounding giving feedback to second language (L2) learners have attracted the interests of a number of researchers to date. Most continue to wonder how to give L2 students effective feedback. Some studies found that ESL/EFL students focus mainly on surface-level issues, those that relate to grammatical and mechanical aspects of writing, when attending to teacher feedback. Others found that students attend to meaning-level feedback as well, which relates to meaning changes, such as sentence clarification or the request to add a topic sentence. This raises a question: why do some students focus on surface-level issues while others focus on meaning-level issues? This study aimed to identify and understand the revision approach of six highly motivated ESL/EFL learners, analyzing their texts and confirming the results from their own point of view. We employed three data sources: structured and retrospective interviews, the students' written texts, and the tutors' written feedback. The students' revised drafts were analyzed using Faighly and Witte's (1981) taxonomy of revisions, which helped to clarify the dominant features of the students' revisions. Even though the students were at the same proficiency level, half of them focused on broader meaning-level changes (labeled as global-oriented students) and the other half were inclined to focus on surface-level changes (labeled as local-oriented students). Determining whether learners are local or global in their orientation is important in increasing the impact of feedback in perfecting students' writing. Further investigation on this issue may significantly improve the way in which written feedback is provided and utilized.

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Keywords: written corrective feedback; revision processes; ESL/EFL students approach to revision; meaning-level and surface-level changes; taxonomy of revision processes

1. Introduction

A number of researchers have been attracted by the study of feedback on second language (L2) learners' writing. Most continue to identify how to give L2 students effective feedback. When considering L2 writers' proficiency levels, scholars found that different language levels might require certain types (direct or indirect) of feedback. For example, advanced level students benefit more from

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receiving indirect feedback (Bitchener & Knoch, 2009), and there is a general consensus that lower English-level students might respond with greater efficacy to direct feedback (Chandler, 2003; Ferris & Roberts, 2001; Kirschner, Sweller, & Clark, 2006). Applications beyond teaching practices, however, have so far been minimal. Two key issues have been obscured in most research: a) the extent to which students respond to feedback, which depends mostly on high motivation to improve their writing; b) examining these responses from the students' point of view. Students who are keen to improve their writing in response to revision processes have been surprisingly neglected in research to date. Most studies often put teachers at 'the center of the stage' (Lee, 2008), reporting their perceptions and focusing on the strategies they should use. Analyzing how students engage with feedback and allowing them to have input into the research has yielded interesting results (Ashwell, 2000; Müller et al., 2017). For example, Ashwell (2000), identifies some studies that found ESL/EFL students focus mainly on surface-level (or micro) features that relate to grammatical and mechanical aspects of writing; others found that students attend to meaning-level (or macro) features that relate to the development of ideas and the organization of a written text.

1.1. Literature review

In this section, we present an overview of studies related L2tutors' use of written feedback, students' attitudes and preferences to feedback, and L2 writers' revisions of multiple drafts.

1.1.1. Feedback and its most useful form

Feedback aids both students and tutors in making sound decisions about the next steps in instruction and learning. A number of scholars (Ashwell, 2000; Bitchener, 2008; Ellis, Sheen, Murakami, & Takashima, 2008; Ferris, 1999; Ferris & Roberts, 2001) found that L2 students' language improves when they are provided with written feedback. Ferris (1999), for example, argues that clear, prioritized and selective feedback could assist student writers. Similarly, Ellis *et al.* (2008) found that written correction was equally effective, and the participants outperformed a control group that did not receive correction on a delayed post-test. However, the question remains as to the form of feedback that is most efficient and well-received.

Ellis (2009) reviewed the different options available for correcting linguistic errors in students' writing, which include direct, indirect, and metalinguistic feedback. Direct methods give explicit directions to learners while indirect methods indicate errors by underlining or using cursors to indicate omissions in the student's text, without correcting them. Metalinguistic feedback is similar to the indirect method, where codes are used to show the nature of the errors. The latter two kinds are often preferred as they employ "guided learning and problem-solving" (Bitchener & Knoch, 2009). Investigators comparing the effectiveness of these methods had mixed findings, resulting in an ongoing debate about the relative merits of each (Chandler, 2003; Kirschner et al., 2006; Lalande, 1982; Storch & Wigglesworth, 2010). For example, indirect-coded feedback was found by Lalande (1982) to improve accuracy in grammatical aspects; on the other hand, Chandler (2003) observed that L2 students benefited more from direct feedback than underlined errors. There is, however, some scholarly agreement that students at different levels of language proficiency benefit from different types of feedback methods. For instance, Chandler (2003), Ferris and Roberts (2001) and Kirschner *et al.* (2006) proposed that direct feedback is more useful for beginners with low competency levels. The disadvantage with direct correction, however, is that it requires less student consideration and may not contribute to longer-term learning. This may affect the development of students' understanding (or proficiency), achievements, and motivation. On the other hand, for advanced learners, an indication of a problem may be sufficient motivation, especially if the corrective codes are well understood (Lee,

2004). Thus, it can be argued that the effective corrective feedback type depends on learners and the given context.

1.1.2. Students' preferences to feedback and their approaches to revision

Because research on students' perceptions is predominantly based on questionnaire surveys (Cohen, 1987; Ferris, 1995), understanding language-students' attitudes to feedback is problematic; L2 students are not a homogenous population who share similar or fixed attitudes toward written feedback (Hedgcock & Lefkowitz, 1994). For example, Cohen (1987) reported that L2 students prefer "local", or grammatical, comments on their forms of expression rather than "global" comments, which relate to meaning, although Hedgcock and Lefkowitz (1994) found L2 students valued all tutors' comments on their errors, local and global. Other studies have shown that their attitudes depend on their goals and motivation (Bruton, 2009; Hyland, 1998).

Although most language students appear to value written feedback, their goals and motivations, as well as their proficiency levels, affect their views (Hyland, 1998), which are also influenced by their focus, or individual interests in content (meaning), or by their form (grammar). For example students who focus on content may think that some feedback interfered with their intended meaning and attempted to take over their ideas (Leki, 1991), while others, who might be primarily interested in grammatical accuracy, report general satisfaction with the feedback they received (Ferris, 2003). Radecki and Swales (1988) found that students reported positive or neutral reactions to extensive tutor response, and, as they became more proficient, they viewed the instructor's role as limited to grammar correction. Similarly, the students in Rowe and Wood's (2008) study reported less interest when they were competent. In this case, feedback simply acts as what the researchers call "guidance." The students viewed detailed feedback to be evidence of appropriate attention to their submissions. Few surveys link student questionnaire responses with actual feedback on specific texts, which could provide clarification of student reactions (Lee, 2008).

Studies on L2 writers' feedback on texts show that students process tutor feedback more effectively if they are allowed to submit several drafts of an assignment (Ferris, 1995, 2006; Hyland & Hyland, 2006). In this way, students have the opportunity to revise and immediately implement the correction, thereby contributing to longer-term learning. Regarding students' attitudes in response to tutors' comments, Hedgcock and Lefkowitz (1996) found that many students view grammatical accuracy as evidence of success, so they often focus on local and surface feedback. Belcher (1989) observed that students make more surface changes than other changes because they find meaning-related issues more challenging; and while some studies (e.g. Paulus, 1999) concluded that some students were able to make global-level changes to their drafts, Conrad and Goldstein (1999) found that L2 students often limit their revision to tutors' comments, as they were unable to make self-initiated revisions. Along similar lines, Storch and Wigglesworth (2010) note that when students have difficulty understanding feedback they often ignore it.

Scholars in this field often suggest that there are different factors affecting L2 learners' revision. First, learners could be influenced by tutor guidance. For example, tutors who focus on grammar and stylistic form over meaning in texts may restrict a student's ability to produce a better-revised draft (Paulus, 1999). L2 writers' revision focus can also be attributed to affective factors, that is, individual differences and abilities: proficiency, preferences, goals; genre type; and time (Hyland, 2003; Storch & Wigglesworth, 2010). In addition, the nature of evaluation criteria may affect students' revisions practices (Guénette, 2007; Sze, 2002). Therefore, ESL/EFL learners perceive revisions as an activity that should affect the surface aspects of texts, thereby causing them to focus on the surface (or micro) features as they revise rather than content (or macro) features. Finally, previous instructional experiences influence students' attitudes toward revision.

1.1.3. Research into feedback processing

Research on feedback processing generally investigates the type of revision students produce in response to feedback, rather than the manner in which they incorporate such feedback into their drafts. Storch and Wigglesworth (2010) concede that the process is problematic as “it is difficult to access such learner-internal cognitive processes” (p. 305). As students’ learning “often takes place without any external, noticeable indicators” (Tracey & Morrow, 2012, p. 58), it is hard to access the internal, unobservable learning mechanisms. This could be the reason for the limited number of research papers exploring this area. Researchers investigating feedback processing have collected their data through surveys (Cohen, 1987; Ferris, 1995), retrospective interviews and written texts (Hyland, 1998, 2003), student and tutor discussions, student drafts (Conrad & Goldstein, 1999), verbal reports and student texts (Alnasser & Alyousef, 2015a, 2015b; Paulus, 1999), student texts and translated retrospective interviews (Sze, 2002), and transcribed interactions between pairs of students (Storch & Wigglesworth, 2010).

An example of survey data collection is Cohen’s (1987) early study of language students from diverse backgrounds. This investigated student processing of feedback on their compositions using a survey questionnaire that was administered a day after students had received their papers and had had a chance to improve. Most tutors (83%) had dealt primarily with grammar. Not all the students read or attended to the written feedback: 81% reported reading over all the comments, and 17% reported reading only some of them; 80% attended to most of the comments and 20% attended to some of them. Students who rated themselves as better overall learners attended more to grammar, mechanics, and vocabulary, whereas students who rated themselves poorly paid less attention to comments. Cohen also pointed to difficulties students had in interpreting comments involving statements related to clarity and explanation. Designing a survey similar to Cohen, Ferris’s (1995) findings differed in some instances, such as: a) students reported that both content and organization (along with grammar) were important to their teachers; b) students used a variety (rather than limited) range of strategies in dealing with problems of teachers’ comments. She stressed the fact that students find their teachers’ feedback useful and believe that it helps them improve their writing.

The adequacy of feedback during revision varies due to individual differences and student approaches to writing. Using retrospective interviews and written texts in a case study approach, Hyland (1998) conducted an in-depth study of tutor feedback with six language students, focusing on two students, Maho and Samron, who showed contrasting patterns of feedback adequacy and tended to be less positive during the course. Maho expected more feedback on ideas and had “a serious approach” to applying feedback in her revision once it met her expectations; she only attended to 51% of her tutors’ feedback. In contrast, Samron insisted on having all her grammatical errors commented upon, and she attended to 91% of her tutors’ comments. Hyland suggested that students’ concerns should be communicated to their tutors because the feedback situation has the potential for misunderstanding. In a later longitudinal study, Hyland (2003) explored the relationship between tutor feedback and student revision in two academic ESL/EFL writing classes investigating both tutors’ form-focused feedback and six students’ texts over a course of 14 weeks. The researcher pointed out that students in most case studies valued feedback on form and had firm belief that such feedback would help them over time. Students’ focus on correct English, however, restricts them to a limited range of structures, which they feel confident in getting right, and might, therefore, hinder their development of some more complex English patterns. Some students did not respond to aspects of feedback, as they were unclear. This is consistent with a study by Conrad and Goldstein (1999), where the students were unsuccessful in revising their drafts when feedback required explanation, explicitness, or analysis. The authors conclude that students’ revision processes reflect their comprehension of tutor feedback, the curriculum, and affective factors.

The studies which compared between peer and tutor feedback used different methods and taxonomies to grasp students' preference towards feedback type. Adopting Faigley and Witte's (1981) peer feedback (PF) taxonomy, Paulus (1999) investigated the effects of both peer and tutor feedback on student revision and found that most students made surface-level changes in response to their tutors' feedback. However, the meaning-level changes they made resulted from both peer and tutor feedback. By the end of his study, Paulus found it difficult to explain why some students- those who had made the highest percentage of meaning-level changes- had an overall improved draft. The researcher concluded that writing multiple drafts would often lead to overall essay improvement. Employing Paulus's (1999) rubrics for evaluating essays, Alnasser and Alyousef (2015a) investigated the impact of macro PF and the tutor's micro comments on the writing quality of 41 Saudi EFL undergraduate students undertaking an English program. Their findings revealed that the macro PF had a greater impact. The participants had started to acquire a better understanding of the importance of macro features. Interestingly, Alnasser and Alyousef (2015b, p. 64) found in a later study that the participants preferred to focus on both levels of PF, as they were "less inclined to agree that focusing on one level alone encourages participation in PF."

Using a taxonomy that was developed from Faigley and Witte (1981), Sze (2002) conducted a case study on a single but "reluctant" ESL/EFL student. She used two retrospective interviews in the students' first language and the student's assignments that required re-drafting. The findings showed that: (1) the participant made more macro-level revisions than micro during processing of the first draft; (2) tutor feedback influenced the student's revisions and the nature of the feedback encouraged more high-level revision; (3) the student had difficulty in making any self-initiated revision; (4) and lastly, the way writing was evaluated seemed to affect the student's attitude toward revision and the use of revision strategies. In a different approach, Storch and Wigglesworth (2010) studied types of corrective feedback with pairs of students. They found that the students who were given direct feedback adopted the correction without discussing the errors, while those who were given indirect feedback identified the errors before deciding on possible corrections, which led to far more extensive discussions. Conversely, learners who liked what the direct feedback suggests adopted the corrections, using them in their revisions. The results indicated that learners who liked direct feedback while processing revisions were motivated to improve and able to use accurate forms in their subsequent revisions.

The current trend in feedback research is that students who find difficulty comprehending correction cannot fully utilize the feedback (Cohen, 1987; Conrad & Goldstein, 1999; Ferris, 1995; Hyland, 2003; Storch & Wigglesworth, 2010). Research into revision processing continues to focus on student improvement in their final product on the basis of written commentary by tutors. This arguably cannot lead to understanding student behavior underpinning the revision process, such as: resources accessed, time spent on revision, and strategies implemented. There is an increasing awareness of the role that 'affective factors' play in feedback; however, motivation as one of these factors has rarely been considered in research designs. To fill the gap in revision literature, therefore, we have opted to select students of high motivation to understand the manner by which they perceive and react to feedback and the underlying factors for revision.

1.2. Research questions

The research questions which motivated our case study are as follows:

- 1- How did the students react to the feedback on their first draft?
- 2- How did the students approach revision?
- 3- What were the reasons behind students' revision choices?

The findings of the present study will be of particular interest to both ESL/EFL tutors and students. The study contributes to the field of feedback in general with its deep investigation and insights.

2. Method

2.1. Research Site & Sampling Procedures

This qualitative case study was conducted in a language center affiliated with a university in Melbourne. The investigation took place within the context of an English for Further Study (EFS) course that aims to prepare students for entry into the university. The course has six levels, and each one lasts ten weeks. This course was selected because it had an intensive focus on writing, with four to six hours a week. Two upper-intermediate level classes were selected.

The students were informed about the focus of the study, which was investigating their approaches to revisions. They were selected based on their level of motivation. A questionnaire (Appendix A) with 10 closed-ended questions was designed to select students with a high level of motivation to improve their English writing. The questions focused on writing issues such as practicing and level of interest in writing in English, correcting difficult versus easy errors and asking for help when revising assignments. This questionnaire was given to 16 participants: eight from each class. Out of the 16 students, 8 were selected: 4 from Nancy's class and 4 from Tim's. However, because two students from Tim's class did not submit their drafts on time, they were omitted from the study, yielding a total number of 6 participants. The participants' demographic information is shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Participants' demographic profiles

Tutor	Student	Age	Country	Education	Length of stay in Australia	Future bachelor's degree
Nancy	Jack	22	China	High school	1 month	B. Computer
	Ruby	22	China	High school	2 months	B. Business
	Tom	21	China	High school	5 weeks	B. Marketing
	Fiona	21	China	High school	2 years	B. Accounting
	Tim	26	China	High school	3 months	B. Business
	Kate	29	Taiwan	College	1.5 years	B. Nursing

This study was granted ethics clearance. The two tutors agreed to participate in our research project and signed the consent form. All participants gave consent for their drafts to be used. Each student received a free movie voucher as a gift at the end of this project.

2.2. Data analysis

A variety of data sources were employed in the study, including interviews, students' written texts and tutors' feedback. The duration of the data collection was four weeks, starting from the time students submitted their first draft and ending after submission of their final draft and receiving their tutor's final feedback. The main data consisted of 12 pieces of writing of about 400–450 words in length per paper: six first drafts and six revised drafts. The first draft was produced by the students as an in-class test. The students were given 30 minutes to prepare a cause and effect essay plan and 60 minutes to complete their work. A week later, they received their tutor's feedback with an initial mark

that could be changed if the students improved their writing and responded to their tutor's notes and comments. Other sources of data were two questionnaires designed by the researchers: the motivation questionnaire mentioned earlier and a demographic information questionnaire. Some email correspondence with the tutors was carried out to clarify issues such as the marking process. Also, two structured and retrospective interviews were conducted with the students (Appendix B): the first after they had received their tutor's initial feedback and the second after receiving their final mark. The first interview mainly investigated students' reactions to feedback on their first drafts; the second focused on students' approaches to feedback and their reasons for their approaches. Various additional questions were asked in the second interview depending on how and why each student approached revision and attended to each comment. Both tutors' feedback was given in the body of the draft and on an attached sheet that sets out the criteria for marking the drafts (Appendix C). This sheet was developed by the language center's coordinator. The majority of the students were likely to score between 50% and 70%. Any mark below or above that needed to be checked and confirmed by the academic coordinator. After submitting their drafts, students' marks generally increase by 5%.

Data analysis procedures were divided into two parts: feedback analysis and revision analysis. All feedback comments on students' first drafts were analyzed according to their focus: structure, content, grammar, vocabulary, negative comments, and positive comments (Table 2).

Table 2. Types and content of feedback comments on students' first drafts

Feedback Type	Content of Feedback
1. Structure	Comments on the organization of the essay and paragraph structure (thesis statement, supporting sentences, unity, coherence, and conclusion). <u>Example:</u> 2) Homeless is a common issue in modern society. 1) The rapid development of society. Change the order here1) general 2) more specific. (Kate's paper) Increase the wealth of human being, causes a series of problems as well.
2. Content	Comments on whether the essay addresses the question, depth and range of ideas and supporting points relevant to the topic. <u>Example:</u> Most of the people due to being contact terrible environment...etc. Is this related to homelessness? (In-text comment)
3. Grammar	- Comments or editing codes on verb phrases and sentence structures, articles, punctuation, word class, etc. <u>Correction forms:</u> e.g. crossing out an unnecessary grammatical aspect or inserting a correct form. - Only comments found in the body of the essay were counted. Overall comments or ticks in the assessment sheet were not included as they tended to repeat the same comments found in the body. Deletion of an unnecessary grammatical aspect was counted.
4. Vocabulary	Editing symbols, reformulation, spelling, formality, and accuracy. Formality also includes changing students' sentences from active to passive. <u>Example:</u> F F F “Computers are important in <u>our</u> life”; “ <u>we</u> can study, work and enjoy <u>ourselves</u> .”
5. Negative comments	Comments with explicit negative words, as found in the participants' papers. <u>Example:</u> “improvement of topic sentence is needed,” “some grammar errors,” “you have not written a clear thesis statement,” etc.
6. Positive comments	Comments with explicit encouragement words. <u>Example:</u> “You have good topic sentence,” “you have the right idea for the writing.”

This focus was guided by the criteria of the assessment sheet (Appendix C). For the purpose of classifying students' revisions, Faigley and Witte's (1981) taxonomy of revisions, based on surface-level and meaning-level, was adapted to clarify how the participants revised their papers to produce

their final drafts (Table 3). The distinction between surface-level changes and meaning-level changes is elaborated in Table 3.

Table 3. Taxonomy of revisions (Adapted from Faigley & Witte, 1981)

I. Surface-Level Changes (Do not affect the meaning. No new information is brought to the text.)

A. Formal changes (editing)

- Spelling/capitalization
- Tense/number/modality
- Abbreviations/contractions
- Punctuation
- Formatting
- Morphological changes

B. Meaning-preserving changes (Paraphrase the original concepts in the text by making them implicit or explicit, without altering the meaning. No new information is brought to the text.)

Primarily syntactical or lexical changes. All information is recoverable by inferencing.)

Additions (information was previously inferred but is now explicit)

Deletions (information was previously explicit but now must be inferred)

Substitutions (elements are traded)

Permutations (elements are rearranged)

Distributions (a single unit becomes more than one unit)

Consolidations (multiple units are combined into one unit)

II. Meaning-Level Changes (Affect the concepts and meaning by bringing new information to the text.)

A. Microstructural Changes (Simple adjustments or elaborations of existing text. Do not affect the overall gist, or direction of the ideas in the text. Do not affect the overall interpretation of the text.)

May involve the use of cohesive ties, causing sentence sequences to be understood as consistent and parallel connected discourse).

Additions

Deletions

Substitutions

Permutations

Distributions

Consolidations

B. Macrostructural Changes (Alter the text's overall direction and gist. Will affect the way a text would be summarized. If the concepts involved in a particular change affect the way other parts of the text are read, it is a macrostructure change. May affect the text's overall global meaning and coherence, influencing the summary and interpretation of the text. Coherence factors may include the focus of the text, relevance to the topic, consideration of audience, overall purpose, and pragmatic unity.)

Additions

Deletions

Substitutions

Permutations

Distributions

Consolidations

In general, surface-level changes are those that do not affect the meaning of the text ("copy-editing" changes), and they can be either *formal* editing changes such as spelling, tense or punctuation or meaning-preserving changes that paraphrase the existing concepts of the original text without altering the information. Both formal and meaning-preserving changes affect the text on a surface or local level. On the other hand, meaning-level changes are those that affect the meaning of the text. This distinction is further clarified by Faigley and Witte (1981, p. 402) as "whether new information is brought to the text or whether the old information is removed in such a way that it cannot be recovered

through drawing inferences." Meaning-level changes are divided into two categories: microstructural (or local) and macrostructural (or global) changes. The latter category is distinguished from the former in that it includes high-level changes in the text's direction and gist, and also organizes the microstructures of discourse as coherent wholes (Van Dijk, 1980).

To locate students' approaches as they revised their papers, a triangulation technique was used to combine the multiple data resources together (questionnaire, interviews, and the students' texts) to explain, confirm, or disconfirm one another (Brown & Rodgers, 2003), thereby providing reliability. Surface-level and meaning-level changes were determined by the way students made changes to their drafts and the extent to which they responded to the comments. The type of approach a student employed was confirmed through the interviews. Local-oriented students were those who focused extensively on body comments by revising grammar and mechanics when editing their papers, whereas global-oriented students were those who focused on end comments by changing many ideas in their final drafts and not restricting themselves to their tutors' instructions. All the participants reported their interest in the research and confirmed its findings.

3. Results

3.1. Overview of students' revisions

This section presents the comments and marks students received on their first draft and the type of revisions students made in order to produce their final draft. The participants' lowest marks were in grammar and vocabulary, whereas their highest marks were in content, followed by the structure.

Table 4 compares students' marks for each category in both the first and the final draft. All students' subsequent drafts received higher marks on the structure and content category, except for Jack who received the same mark on his second draft. Tom's overall mark was the highest.

Table 4. Students' marks and percentages on the first two drafts

Tutor	Student	First Draft out of 30				Final Draft out of 20				%
		Content	Structure	Grammar & Vocab.	Total Mark	%	Structure & Content	Grammar & Vocab.	Total out of 20	
Nancy	Jack	6.75	6.50	5.75	19.00	63.34	6.75	6.50	13.25	66.25
	Ruby	7.00	6.75	6.00	19.75	65.84	7.20	7.00	14.20	71.00
	Tom	7.50	6.75	6.00	20.25	67.50	7.80	7.50	15.30	76.50
	Fiona	6.00	6.50	5.00	17.50	58.34	7.20	6.25	13.45	67.25
Tim	Ronald	5.60	5.60	5.50	16.70	55.67	7.00	6.00	13.00	65.00
	Kate	5.00	5.50	5.00	15.50	51.67	6.50	6.00	12.50	62.50

All the students showed improvement in grammar and vocabulary in their final drafts. Table 5 shows the number of feedback comments for each category on the students' first draft. Grammar comments comprised over 75% of the total number of comments, followed by vocabulary.

Table 5. Types of comments on the students' first drafts (in percentages)

Tutor	Student	Content %	Structure %	Grammar %	Vocabulary %	Unclear %	%	Total
Nancy	Jack	0.00	3.30	73.62	23.08	0.00	100	91
	Ruby	1.37	4.11	83.56	5.48	5.48	100	73
	Tom	1.49	2.98	95.53	0.00	0.00	100	67
	Fiona	1.28	5.13	91.03	1.28	1.28	100	78
Tim	Ronald	0.00	14.03	78.95	3.51	3.51	100	57
	Kate	2.00	16.00	82.00	0.00	0.00	100	50
	Total	0.96	6.73	83.90	6.73	1.68	100	416

Jack received the highest number of comments, followed by Fiona. Table 6 indicates that the negative and the positive comments students received were balanced, except for Fiona who received two positive and seven negative comments, and Ronald, who did not receive any positive feedback.

Table 6. Evaluative end comments

Tutor	Student	Positive	Negative	Structure	Content	Grammar	Vocabulary
Nancy	Jack	1	3	2	0	3	1
	Roby	1	1	1	0	3	1
	Tom	2	1	1	1	3	0
	Fiona	2	7	4	0	6	0
Tim	Ronald	0	1	7	0	0	0
	Kate	3	2	6	1	1	0
	Total	9	15	21	2	16	2

Most of the evaluative end comments were devoted to grammatical and structural aspects, whereas vocabulary and content received the fewest. Jack, Ruby, and Tom acted upon most of their tutors' comments or notes, whereas Fiona, Ronald, and Kate did not make as much use of their tutors' feedback (Table 7).

Table 7. Extent of students' use of feedback

Tutor	Student	Total Points Offered	Total Points Acted Upon	Percentage
Nancy	Jack	91	90	99.00
	Roby	73	71	98.00
	Tom	67	66	99.00
	Fiona	78	15	19.00
Tim	Ronald	57	13	23.00
	Kate	50	17	34.00

Fiona, Ronald, and Kate added new information (macrostructural level) to their essay and made few surface changes. Table 8 illustrates the type of revision each student attended to, giving an overview of whether their changes were formal or meaning-preserving (surface-level changes), and microstructure or macrostructure (meaning-level changes).

Table 8. Types of revisions from draft1 to draft 2

Tutor	Student	Surface-Level Changes			Meaning-Level Changes		
		Formal	Meaning-Preserving	Total	Microstructure	Macrostructure	Total
Nancy	Jack	27	5	32	3	2	5
	Ruby	75	0	75	0	3	3
	Tom	71	3	74	0	0	0
Tim	Fiona	10	3	13	6	7	13
	Ronald	7	4	11	7	5	12
	Kate	7	3	10	12	5	17

All students varied in their use of surface-level changes and meaning-level changes, except for Tom, who restricted himself to surface changes only. Examples of surface-level and meaning-level changes are shown below.

Before revision (first draft):

It is very clear that computers are very important for young people, but we cannot ignore their negative effects. (Tom)

After revision (final draft)

It is very clear that computers are very important for young people but their negative effects cannot be ignored. (Surface-level changes, Tom)

Before revision (first draft):

The main cause of homeless is redundancy. (Jack)

After revision (final draft)

The main cause of homeless is redundancy which brought about insufficient income. (Meaning-level changes, Jack)

3.2. Students' reactions to feedback

The findings related to students' reactions to feedback and some detailed descriptions of their first and final drafts were tabulated (Appendix C). The participants' reactions informed their individual approaches to revision and influenced their reasons for such approaches. Their final opinions of their writing improvement are presented at the end of each case.

3.2.1. Jack

This course was Jack's first experience studying in an English speaking country. Jack's tutor described him as a "quiet achiever" who thinks carefully before doing anything and would, therefore, participate in class only when he knew the answers. Despite a large number of feedback comments, Jack's overall mark on the first draft was satisfactory in all aspects of his essay (Appendix C). In an interview related to his reaction to feedback on the first draft, Jack said that when he writes in English he is still thinking in Chinese, and, therefore, what he produces seems to make sense to him. However, the large number of comments caused Jack to doubt his ability to produce a good piece of writing:

When I finish my essay, I think it is good but when my tutor check, I found there are many errors, and I think maybe my ability, my ability is not good enough.

Jack attended to 98% of his tutor's feedback in the final draft (Table 7). Most of his revision strategies were surface-level (32) as shown in Table 8. The only meaning-level revisions that he made

were influenced by his tutor's feedback which suggested the need to improve topic sentences. Jack also agreed with his tutors' request to improve topic sentences and believed that he eventually made them clearer.

When I first write my topic sentence of the paragraph is not good enough and I changed my topic sentence, here, and I changed it so it is clearly the first and second cause is very clear, as in I take some words away and two facts and the conclusion.

Jack's many successful surface-level revisions were attributed to his claim that he understood his tutor's feedback and to the many correction clues he received from his tutor, such as "verb-ing" and "pres perf" for present perfect. The reason Jack's final draft did not radically differ might be attributed to the tutor's evaluative end comment:

Reasonable structure. Improvement of topic sentences is needed, various grammar errors and some informalities need to be corrected.

Starting with a positive comment on structure, with less detailed negative comments, could have given Jack confidence in his essay. Furthermore, the tutor focused mainly on grammar and vocabulary (Appendix C), with little emphasis given to structure either in the body or in the end comments. As keen in his overall writing improvement, Jack was not happy about attending to grammar and vocabulary corrections. However, he believed that he could have submitted a better draft if he only had more time to revise:

Interviewer: Do you think you can submit a better draft?

Jack: If I take time I think I can change the situation.

Interviewer: You think it is about time?

Jack: Yes more time the better.

Jack argued that fear of making new mistakes held him back from adding new information in the final draft; he thought that if he added ideas he may be not able to make them clear for readers.

You know when I get some ideas I want to write them down maybe the new sentence I write is not good enough to let the reader know what I think.

It took Jack an hour to complete the final draft. When he revised his paper, Jack said he often referred to his tutor's comments. Given that most of his errors were grammar-related, he would check his grammar book or dictionary, or consult his friends for some useful ideas. Jack wanted to improve his draft first to improve his writing skills and also to achieve a high mark:

I think the marks is just important because I should finish my class and I should learn my computer science

When asked whether he believed he achieved some improvement in the final draft he said, "yes, but I think I still need to improve."

3.2.2. Ruby

Ruby's tutor described her as "fairly outgoing [and] contributing well in class. Her writing is reasonably good, just a couple of weaknesses." Ruby often studies hard to achieve high marks as a way to please her parents overseas, as high marks are the only evidence of her hard work. She values positive feedback and indicated that she would feel excited if her tutor wrote "well done." The total mark for Ruby's final draft was 71% (Table 4), and her highest mark was on the content. Ruby

received equal numbers of positive and negative comments (Table 6). During the first interview, Ruby raised an important point about her reaction to her tutor's feedback:

Sad, so many red, and I think I didn't do this work very well, so I feel a little nervous about this, and maybe the less red my tutor encourage me "you do, you're well done" so I am very happy than this, but the first term tutor didn't talk with me I think I did less better, so I am not happy—but now my tutor talk with me, I think I have some space to improve myself, so it is better.

It took Ruby half an hour to revise her final draft. Her total mark only improved by 2%. She focused on her tutor's feedback and made good use of it. Ruby acted upon 98% of the tutor's feedback (Table 7). Like Jack, Ruby's major revisions focused on surface errors. She added only three new sentences to the final draft as a response to her tutor's queries on three different sentences that were circled as being irrelevant, unclear, or needing a re-write. In total, Ruby made 75 surface revisions and 3 meaning revisions (Table 8). Ruby's focus on surface revisions might have been related to many reasons. First, she might have been encouraged by the tutor's end comment:

Generally well-structured Ruby. Some grammar errors, including verb, word class, and wrong word choices are present, as well as some informality.

In addition, Ruby also indicated in the second interview that writing new sentences could undermine her grade by committing new errors:

Because I am afraid if I change the idea, the sentence maybe I have more grammar mistakes will appear, so I didn't change the ideas, I haven't. My tutor just says this sentence is okay, I will not change this.

She also attributed her determined focus on surface revisions to being new in the language center and being unaware of the "right" way to correct the essay:

I have no idea, I just come to this language center, maybe it is the first essay in here, so I had just, am not clear about the real way to correct my essay just the grammar and some sentences is not very, it is unclear.

Ruby's approach to revision included asking the tutor about how she could correct her errors. Her tutor recommended that she looks at the comments to understand the problems in her essay. Any comment or query from her tutor meant to Ruby that she should change the whole idea:

My tutor asked me "this is unclear" and asked me "is it a concluding sentence?" so I think it is wrong so I changed it, I didn't think more about this sentence it is much better maybe I correct it so I just want to change it.

Ruby would also ask some of her friends to explain the errors that she found difficult to correct:

I ask my classmate to help me about this why I am wrong and how I can correct it and my classmate can say "maybe you can correct this by this sentence like this" and then, so I can correct it.

After writing a revised draft, Ruby believed that she had improved (interview 2):

Interviewer: Do you think that your revision has improved your writing? Ruby: Yeah it is more important I have improved.

3.2.3. Tom

Tom was described by his tutor as one of her “top students who found the level a little easy but actually works reasonably hard.” She said, “He can work fairly quickly, he could be able to do something in an hour that other students might take two or three hours to get done.”

Most of Tom’s errors were on grammar. He received more positive (2) feedback than negative (1) (Table 6). Tom received the highest mark out of all other participants on both drafts (67.50% and 76.50% respectively) (Table 4). Like Ruby and Jack, Tom’s highest mark was on content. When Tom received his first draft with the tutor’s red marks, he thought that having errors was good as he could learn from them:

Interviewer: How do you feel about having all these errors?

Tom: Error is a good thing.

Interviewer: Why do you think it is good?

Tom: When I saw these errors, it is very good for my practice.

Tom’s grammar and vocabulary improved in the final draft, as he attended to 99% of his tutor’s comments (Table 7). What was surprising was that his mark on structure and content greatly improved although he did not make any changes in this area. In fact, his tutor wrote on his final draft:

Actually, Tom, I realized when re-assessing your essay that your topic sentences need to improve, as they contain the controlling idea, but not the topic. However, I have not deducted any marks for this at this stage. Just be aware that topic sentences need to improve.

Tom’s revisions were mainly surface-related, concerning grammar and spelling changes. He received two comments for structure (organization) and one comment for content (Table 5). Tom did not add any new text in his final draft, making him the only student who never made any meaning-related revision; rather, the revisions were purely surface-level (Table 8). When asked about the reason for this he said:

I think my essay is so-so, is just so-so I think is okay; this is why I left everything as it is.

Like Ruby, Tom also believed that he might lose marks if he added new information to the final draft:

I want make my skill to write article better, and I think change my article would happen cut off scores.

Tom spent 40 minutes editing the final essay. When describing the way he revised the paper he said:

At first I looked the mistakes all of the essay then I correct one by one after that I checked my whole essay.

Tom consulted some friends and used grammar and vocabulary references or a dictionary to correct his errors. Overall, he believed that his second draft was an improvement, but he was not happy with the amount of revisions he made.

3.2.4. Fiona

In the first interview, Fiona expressed interesting concerns about improving her writing. For example, she believed that the secret behind good writing was “the words for vocabulary, how to use

it and when to use it" and that she was struggling to master that knowledge. She often had difficulty communicating ideas as her speaking skills were weak. The tutor was aware of Fiona's concerns and believed that Fiona generally "tries very hard, really wants to do well." Her tutor felt that Fiona made major improvements during the course.

Fiona received more negative (7) feedback than positive (2), Table 6, as the tutor's end comments focused on grammar (6) and structure (4). In fact, Fiona's grammar was the main reason behind losing most of the marks, as commented by her tutor:

Generally, you have the right idea for the writing, but thesis statement and grammar problems have reduced your mark.

When comparing Fiona's first and final drafts, it is evident that she had a different approach to correcting the errors (Appendix C). She changed almost half of her ideas in the final draft, only to get a 4% improvement in the final draft. Fiona, however, improved in all aspects, as she made 13 surface-level changes as well as 13 meaning-related changes (Table 8). Meaning-related changes were dominant in her draft, although the number of those changes does not reflect this because a change to a word or a new sentence could each be counted as one revision. Fiona only made use of 19% of the tutor's overall feedback comments (Table 7). She admitted, however, that she valued her tutor's feedback and believed it gave her ideas to improve the draft (interview 2):

Gave me the comments very well and more ideas and more methods to improve my writing skills.

Possible reasons for Fiona's preference for surface-level changes could include the belief that organizing ideas is of utmost importance. For example, when asked why she changed the whole conclusion and replaced it with a new one, Fiona said:

That conclusion has no summary of that essay and have no, that's a big problem have no summary I will change.

Her opinion on the conclusion was influenced by the tutor's feedback in the body of her first draft essay which read:

This conclusion is not clear. You should first have a sentence which summarizes the main points or restates the thesis statement. Then a final thought or recommendation. Do not introduce new ideas.

In addition, time pressure could be another cause that attributed to her dissatisfaction with her writing level during the in-class exam:

Um, first when I write this paper in the exam, I have nervous, so my speed is very lost, so I want to change my speed to fast, to always fast, and my mistake is very easy.

After correcting all the surface-related errors, Fiona found that the ideas of her essay were not "good enough," therefore, she decided to change them: "I want to do better than this, so I will change it."

Fiona spent almost four hours on four different days on revising the final draft. Despite believing that her tutors' detailed feedback is important, Fiona made little use of it in the body of the essay. She looked at the evaluative end comments instead and changed many parts. She received only two positive comments and seven negative ones (Table 6), which were related to grammar. When asked how she revised the first draft, Fiona said:

I will read again and again before I check it and after I check it then with a dictionary and something the tutor told me to change it, for some words I will check the dictionary.

Overall, she believed that she achieved some improvement in the final draft.

Yeah, I think the second draft is better than before, they have so many times to check it and I will use a dictionary to help me and I will read it, again and again,, to reduce the mistakes at lowest.

3.2.5. Ronald

In general, Ronald's writing outshines his speaking skills. He believes that having errors in his paper is an opportunity to learn. Like Jack, he believes that most of his errors were caused by language transfer; the process of using his first language while writing in the second language:

Maybe sometimes in my mind, I use my own country language to write in English searching much information but in English, you might.

In his first draft, Ronald received a total of 65 comments from his tutor, most of which were on grammar. The evaluative end comments did not include any positive comments, but it did include one negative and seven comments on structure (Table 6). Ronald did not seem to have any problem seeing his paper with many marked errors and marginal notes (interview1):

Um, I feel no bad because the tutor checked many mistakes, I can understand I make some mistakes, I think it is not very difficult for me mistake about grammar and spelling.

Like Fiona, Ronald overall mark increased in the final draft in all the aspects (Appendix C). The majority of Ronald's revisions were meaning-related, as shown in Table 8. He only attended to 23% of his tutor's feedback (Table 7). Although he had 11 surface-level changes, he had a total of 12 meaning changes at both micro and macro structural levels, which meant he added a lot of new information to the final draft and made few surface changes.

Possible reasons for changing almost three-quarters of his first draft and adding much new information in the second draft might be attributed to his tutor's end comments that focused on meaning-related issues. The following is an example from the end comments written by his tutor: (Table 6)

- 1) Intro: change your sentence order
- 2) Some points need clarifying
- 3) Add to the transition paragraph causes and effects.

Ronald believed, like Fiona, that he did not write well in class due to time pressure and that his ideas were not presented in a logical manner:

Maybe in exam I had not much time to think more details I think so I write not very in order or not very logical, at home maybe so I can add more ideas.

Ronald spent almost two hours revising his paper. What we can gather from Ronald's method of revising his paper is that he first checked the end comments that evaluated his overall performance and tried to revise accordingly. His revision resources, as mentioned in his second interview, were 1) Microsoft Word, 2) his tutor, and 3) a search engine on the internet to help him find ideas.

Ronald believes that the more he reads in English the more likely it is he can adopt a native-like structure. He thinks that only grammar problems are restricting him from expressing his ideas. Therefore, mastering grammar was not only a goal in itself but also a means for Ronald to help clarify his ideas. Ronald thinks his final draft has improved as a result of his changes:

I think the whole essay look structure is clearly and then, the sentence getting in order, I think it maybe better.

3.2.6. *Kate*

Kate is keen to learn English in general and practise writing in particular. Therefore, she tries her best to achieve a high accuracy in writing because she believes it will help her future academic achievements.

The total number of feedback comments in Kate's first draft was 50. Like most of the students, most of comments were on grammar (Appendix C). Kate received the lowest mark out of all the participants, 51.67%. She also received the lowest marks in both content (5) and structure (5.5). Despite these low marks, Kate got three positive end comments (Table 6). She received a single comment on both content and grammar, but six end comments on structure. Upon receiving her tutor's first draft feedback, Kate felt frustrated for having so many errors (interview 1): "Yeah, I feel is not good I felt frustrated because the essay is not good." In general, she believes that feedback can actually help her with better ideas about how she could correct her errors to improve the final draft:

I think correct our mistake and give me some suggestion maybe this sentence is better and my sentence, yeah I think he will help me better

Kate spent "three hours or more" revising the final draft. Like Fiona and Ronald, Kate's total mark improved in all aspects (Appendix C). Compared to other participants, Kate's most meaning-level changes were in the second draft (Table 8). She also received more positive feedback than negative; however, this did not seem to have any effect on her decisions when revising because she decided to make major structural changes in the final draft.

When asked why she changed many sentences, Kate replied that it was because in her first draft she tended to "jump in another idea [and], they suggest I need to write more logical content to my essay." Like all the participants, Kate was fully aware of her errors and thought that improving the content of her essay was crucial for her improvement (interview 2):

Because the tutor said my content is not good and the same I feel is not good so I just change better sentence and good idea better than before so I just print new idea in my essay.

Looking at her first draft, however, there is no evidence that her tutor commented negatively on her content. It could be that the tutor gave this comment orally in their individual face-to-face session. Moreover, focusing on meaning meant that Kate only attended to 33% of her tutor's overall comments (Table 7). Kate believed that revising her errors at the level of meaning could prepare students for academic writing:

Because I think if it is more academic, so I change the word significant instead of important. If we don't use more difficult vocabulary we use easy words, now we are high level we need to use more difficult words.

Kate reported that she used the internet as she revised:

I research the internet about homelessness I get more ideas maybe no money, no house, many ideas so I think in order to write new...Yeah

In addition, she often acted upon the feedback that provided a suggestion on content or structure:

Interviewer: Do you still use the tutors' feedback?

Kate: Yeah, I just take the tutor's suggestions and rewrite a second time.

Interviewer: What was the most useful feedback you felt the tutor gave you?

Kate: Feedback I think logical content, the first time I did not have time to think, my paper so I don't have a logical organization.

All in all, Kate believed that she achieved some improvement in her final draft.

I felt this better than first draft because more organization and use more difficult vocabulary in essay.

4. Discussion

The findings of the case study reveal that the students' overall marks ranged between 62% and 77%, and all students received surface-level and meaning-level comments. This is consistent with Ferris (1995) and Hyland and Hyland (2006), who pointed out that tutors actually focus on grammar and content when correcting. Generally, positive and negative comments seemed to have little effect on students' revisions. They did not influence students' strategies or choice of revisions. For example, Kate received three positive comments but went on to change many parts of her essay.

It was also found, as in previous research, that ESL/EFL students used either a local (a focus on the grammar and mechanics of writing) or a global (a focus on content and ideas) approach to revision, each approach implying a different strategy for revision (Table 9).

Table 9. The participants' approaches to revision

Student	Approach to revision
Jack	Local: Consulted grammar books and some friends.
Ruby	Local: Prioritized consulting his tutor over any other person or consulting friends.
Tom	Local: Consulted grammar books and some friends.
Fiona	Global: Read evaluative end comments and changed many parts of essay, despite belief that the tutors' feedback is important.
Ronald	Global: Used the Microsoft Word, asked for clarification, and used a search engine on the internet.
Kate	Global: Prioritized logical organization of ideas and used the internet.

Based on the data, a local approach to revision suggests that the students focused on body comments (range 27–71 of formal changes, Table 8) rather than end comments. Their revisions were limited to their tutors' comments and suggestions, and they attended to 98%–99 % of them (Table 7). A local-oriented student tends to read all of the comments first and think of ways to correct them, which is consistent with Sze's (2002) findings. Then they attend to each one separately (e.g., Tom: "I correct them one by one"), spend half an hour to an hour revising in one sitting and, if they find difficulty correcting some errors, they consult a grammar book to determine if the error is easily corrected. Ferris (1999) also indicated that students found some grammar comments "treatable." If not, they would ask their tutors or friends about the errors. When they have finished revising and checking their final draft, they often ask their friends to double-check and make sure they do not skip attending to any aspect of their tutors' comments. For example, Jack said his friend found some grammatical aspects that he did not notice and he changed them: "yeah my friend, she found some mistakes and she told me so we changed them." Because they spent a relatively short time revising, they appeared to make quicker decisions when they wanted to make a few meaning-level changes that were required by their tutor. For instance, Jack seemed to easily locate the areas that needed

improvement, as they were marked by his tutor: “I change my topic sentence, here, and I changed it so it is clearly...the first and second cause [and effect] is clear. I take some words away and two facts and the conclusion.” Most of their meaning-level changes, however, resulted from “unclear” comments by their tutors or cursory meaning- level instructions, such as the need to add a clear topic sentence at the beginning of a paragraph.

On the other hand, global-oriented students were those who changed many ideas in their final drafts and did not restrict themselves to their tutors’ instructions. In fact, they only attended 19%-33 % of their tutors’ comments, which suggests that most of their revisions were self-initiated. These findings are inconsistent with Sze (2002) and Conrad and Goldstein (1999), who suggested that L2 writers very rarely make any self-initiated revisions. Global-oriented students in the present study tended to focus on their tutors’ end comments and body comments while processing revisions, reading them not only carefully but repeatedly—“again and again” (Fiona)—to locate the areas they needed to improve, in a process of “diagnosing the nature of the problems in the original text” (Hyland, 1998, p. 277). Then they decided on the paragraphs and ideas that they needed to change (Fiona: “that conclusion has no summary of the essay...that’s a big problem, have no summary, I will change it”; Kate: “my content is not good”). Before starting to write, they looked for different sources of information to re-structure their essay, which consumed a lot of their time—from two to four hours on different days. Ronald and Fiona reported that before writing their new drafts, they would ask their tutors about “ways” to improve their essays. They reported using the Internet to find “more” (Kate) and “new” (Ronald) ideas about their topics. They would then double-check their writing “again and again” (Fiona). None reported having their friends or tutors check it for them after their essays were ready for final submission. This could be attributed to the change of ideas, as there were no specific areas for which they could seek consultation.

Global- and local-oriented students have different beliefs and approaches to feedback. Local-oriented students often believed they would lose marks if they added more ideas because of the increased chance of new grammatical errors. Global-oriented students, in contrast, believed that changing the content of their essay was crucial for improving their writing. Local-oriented students’ final scores were higher than that of global-oriented students because every student was expected to improve only 5%. Global-oriented students got lower marks in their first draft, which contributed to their final marks being lower than local-oriented students. Despite the fact that all students believed that they improved in their final draft, global-oriented students showed greater satisfaction with their final papers than local-oriented students, who believed that they could improve their writing further if they wanted (Tom and Jack).

Generally, all students reported revising their paper by referring to their tutors’ comments, which is in line with a number of studies (Cohen, 1987; Paulus, 1999; Sze, 2002). Local-oriented students focused mainly on formal changes with a few meaning-level changes that were marked by their tutors as being “unclear” (Conrad & Goldstein, 1999). Interestingly, Tom attended to almost 100% of his tutor’s feedback—like the student Kazuko in Paulus’s (1999) study—which contrasts with the claim made in some studies that ESL/EFL students rarely initiate any self-revision and make only local amendments that seldom improve the overall quality of their writing (Conrad & Goldstein, 1999; Sze, 2002).

The finding that most of the students were frustrated upon receiving a heavily marked paper has been documented in a number of studies (Fazio, 2001; Polio & Fleck, 1998; Sheppard, 1992). Two of the students (Tom and Ronald), however, were more positive in response to the areas in which they needed to improve. Interestingly, despite their disappointment, students reported a preference for longer and more detailed comments as it gave them “space to improve” (Ruby). In addition, the students found that clear and direct feedback from tutors provided “some information” (Jack) that

helped them understand what was required for improvement. Most of them believed that they were able to improve their papers based on the clarity of their tutors' instruction; this notion was also supported by Goldstein (2006). They also indicated that feedback comments could help them with "better ideas" and "useful suggestions" in subsequent drafts.

In some studies, students' proficiency levels were attributed to the focus of their revision. A number of studies report that students of a higher proficiency level tend to make more major meaning-related revisions that could improve their marks (Hayes, 2004; Hyland, 1998; Manchón, Roca de Larios, & Murphy, 2009; Paulus, 1999) than those of lower proficiency level (Cohen, 1987), who wished to receive extensive feedback (Radecki & Swales, 1988). However, the participants' proficiency levels did not seem to be a determining factor in their approach to revision in the current study, since most of the students' writing proficiency was in the same upper-intermediate level. Students reported reading both the end comments and the body comments before revising.

A number of studies have reported that various aspects of the comments influence the revision approach (local or global), including length of end comments vs. positive or negative feedback, focus on form or content, students' beliefs, students' goals, and the grading system. First, some studies suggested that positive feedback has a great impact on student confidence and motivation (Hyland, 1998), while others suggested that some forms of positive feedback actually discourage student revision (Duppenthaler, 2002). However, this study suggests that the length of tutors' end comments affected students' decisions before starting their revision. Short instructions made students feel more confident in their writing (e.g., Tom said "I think my essay is good"). Conversely, receiving detailed instructions in the end comments might have caused the global-oriented students to think that their essay was not well-written and needed extensive change (Fiona). Positive and negative comments alone did not seem to make any difference to students in terms of improving their drafts. The second aspect reported in the literature is that ESL/EFL students may be influenced by the focus of their tutors' feedback, which may in turn influence students' approach to revision. The findings indicated that tutors' focus on grammar, content, vocabulary or structure did not influence students' decision to only partially correct their essays (in the case of local-oriented students) or to change most of it (global). These findings contrast with Paulus's (1999) study, which suggested that students' focus on grammar is influenced by their tutors' overall focus on grammar. Students who tended to be global in their approach received a higher number of comments on structure than local-oriented students. This, however, was not the key reason for significant meaning changes in their essay in the present study, as they could have restricted themselves to the structural changes requested by their tutors. Further, many studies suggest that students' beliefs may play a crucial role in their revision approach (Conrad & Goldstein, 1999; Goldstein, 2006). Jack, Tom, and Ruby (local-oriented) reported that their only problems were with grammar and expression that had been indicated by direct tutor feedback and, therefore, their revision focused entirely on these tutor-directed errors. In contrast, Fiona, Kate, and Ronald thought that their only problems were with the logical flow of ideas (content). Hence, their decisions were directly related to what they believed needed to be revised. Fourth, Biggs (1987) suggested that students implement a surface-approach when their goals are directly related to surface issues such as marks or fear of making mistakes, whereas those who have a deep approach to learning improve their writing by making radical changes as they revise. Ronald's main purpose in the present study was to have a more "logical" order and Kate intended to practice academic writing with "difficult vocabulary." Finally, the grading system could play an important role in students' approach to revision (Guénette, 2007). The findings revealed that the surface-oriented group tended to rely on their high marks, compared with the global-oriented group who only achieved 55% or less. Despite their low marks, global-oriented students strived to improve. This is consistent with some studies that suggested that students who get low marks become less motivated to revise (Cohen & Robbins, 1976).

Although the reasons behind students' different approaches might be broad and dynamically varied, these methods of revision could be divided into one of two categories: a global approach or a local approach.

5. Conclusions and pedagogical implications

This study aimed to provide a deeper understanding of ESL/EFL students' revision processing and to examine their approaches and reactions to written commentary. The general lack of focus in the literature on different revision approaches has led to confusion and inaccurate causes for students' revision tendencies. Although prior research has focused attention on whether L2 students attend more to surface or meaning comments, Hyland (1998, 2003) has repeatedly found that students did not attend to most of their tutors' comments but attributed the revision approach to students' proficiency levels or to the nature of the tutors' feedback. However, students in this study did refer to their tutors' comments, and that they tended to be local or global in their approach for a range of reasons. The findings showed that the differences between the participants who showed surface-level orientation and the others, who changed most parts of their drafts, were striking.

The new insight this study offers is that both local and global approaches to revision should be acknowledged as equally legitimate. This may help initiate progressive and equitable teaching practices. In this model, local-oriented students could be given detailed feedback, as they are likely to use it effectively in subsequent drafts, while guiding the global-oriented students towards ways and ideas to improve their writing through comments on their ideas. Hence, determining whether the learner is local or global oriented can increase the impact of the feedback used by students to improve their writing. An awareness of the different revision strategies ESL/EFL students implement will promote an understanding of the various ways students incorporate feedback into their revision process; this, in turn, will help us give more effective and meaningful feedback to all students.

Despite this insight, some limitations must be acknowledged. The data is restricted to a small sample size and, therefore, it is difficult to draw concrete conclusions from the findings. The language barrier was another issue during the interviews, with some students finding it hard to communicate effectively. Some of the questions were simply ignored as students sometimes felt tired; students often repeated themselves or misinterpreted the meaning of some questions. Further research would benefit from a larger sample size and students being interviewed in their own language.

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Appendix A. The Questionnaire

Name: _____

Class: _____

Contact details:

Email address: _____

Phone: _____ mobile phone: _____

Please tick -- ✓-- the appropriate answer by choosing the answer which represents your opinion.

1. Do you practice writing English by only doing assignments the teacher has given you?

Yes ----- No, I practise writing other things as well -----

2. Do you correct only the written errors that are easy and straight forward?

Yes ----- No, I try to correct the more difficult errors as well-----

3. How many times do you revise your papers?

Once ----- Many times -----

4. Do you ask for help when revising your assignments?

Yes ----- No -----

5. After you revise your paper, do you feel confident about your corrections?

Yes, mostly ----- Not really -----

6. How long does it take you to revise your essay after receiving your teacher's feedback?

Less than 90 minutes ----- More than 90 minutes -----

7. I like writing in my first language

Yes ----- No -----

8. I like writing in English

Yes ----- No -----

9. Grammatical accuracy is very important to me

Yes ----- No -----

10. How would you classify yourself in English writing?

Highly motivated ----- Average -----

Appendix B: Retrospective Interview Prompts

Prompts (1)

- 1- How do you feel about having all these errors?
- 2- What do you think about the first error? Do you think you can correct it? How?
- 3- What are you going to do if you cannot correct your mistakes?
- 4- Do you think you can submit a better draft? Why?
- 5- How long do you think will take you to revise your paper?

Prompts (2)

(Adapted from Hyland, 1998).

General overview of the revisions carried out

1. How long did you spend revising this draft?
2. Could you describe what you did as you revised? For example, did you read the feedback first or did you refer to the feedback as you revised?
3. What were the main changes you made to the draft?
4. What do you think was the most important change you made to the draft?

General overview of feedback use

1. What was the most useful feedback your tutor gave you on this draft?
2. Did you get feedback from any other source?
3. What use did you make of your [tutors'] comments?

Global comments and changes

1. Why do you think your tutor has made this comment?
2. What changes did you make to the writing after you read this comment?
3. Do you feel more satisfied with your writing now? Why (not)?

Localized comments and changes

1. What do you think this comment is asking you to do?
2. What change did you make to your writing because of this comment?
3. Do you think your change has improved the writing?
4. How has it improved your writing?

Comments and corrections ignored

1. Why do you think your tutor has made this comment?
2. Why didn't you make any changes to the writing?
3. Do you think there is still a problem with the writing?

Student evaluation of their success in revising

1. When you look at your 1st and 2nd drafts, do you feel satisfied with your revisions?

Appendix C: Outline of the case study: students' reactions to Feedback

Student Case study Item	Jack	Ruby	Tom	Fiona	Ronald	Kate
First draft total mark (Hata! Başvuru kaynağı bulunamadı.) & highest comments in percentage	63.34%: Most on grammar, 73.62%, and vocabulary, 23.08%: Got highest comments.	65.84%: Most on grammar, 83.56%.	67.50%: Most on grammar, 95.53%.	58.34%: Most on grammar, 91.03%.	55.67%: Most on grammar, 78.95%, and structure, 14.03%.	51.67%: Most on grammar, 82%, and structure, 16%: Got lowest comments.

(Hata! Başvuru kaynağı bulunamadı.)						
Reaction to feedback on the first draft (Interviews)	Felt “terrible” when received the first draft with many errors marked by the tutor.	Disappointed by many errors but glad to have “a space to improve myself.”	Errors are good for practice.	Felt “sad” receiving many comments.	Aware I usually make many mistakes.	Frustrated for having many errors but “I believe this can help her get ideas to improve my writing.”
Description of the final draft (Hata! Başvuru kaynağı bulunamadı.)	Improved (66.25%): Most on grammar and vocabulary.	Improved (71%): Most on grammar and vocabulary.	Improved (76.50%): Most on grammar and vocabulary.	Improved (67.25%) in all aspects: grammar and vocabulary & structure & content.	Improved (65%) in all aspects: structure & content & grammar and vocabulary.	Improved (62.50%) in all aspects: grammar and vocabulary & structure & content.
Reasons for surface-level changes (Interview 2)	Tutor’s evaluative end comments/ Limited time/ Fear of making new mistakes.	Tutor’s evaluative end comments/ Fear of making new mistakes/ unaware of the “right” way to correct essay.	Didn’t add any new text in the final draft: Fear of making new mistakes.	Belief that ideas were the only things that needed to change/ time pressure.	Tutor’s evaluative end comments: e.g. explain, add, clarify/ organization of ideas / time pressure.	Tutor’s face-to-face feedback and to prepare for university writing requirements.
Approach to revision	Local: Consulted grammar books and some friends.	Local: Prioritized consulting tutor over any other person/ consulting friends.	Local: Consulted grammar books and some friends.	Global (4 hrs): Read evaluative end-comment and changed many parts of essay, despite believe that the tutors’ feedback is important.	Global (2hrs): Word program/ asked for clarification /used a search engine on the internet.	Global (3 hrs): Prioritized logical organization of ideas and used the internet.

Appendix D: Criteria Sheet and grading system

Stage 4A EFS Writing – Criteria for Assessing In Class Cause and Effect Essay

Mark	Essay structure	Draft 1	
Total=10	Introduction: Appropriate general/background statements/definition;		
	Unity: clear topic sentences; appropriate supporting sentences		
	Conclusion: restatement of thesis/summary of main ideas; final thoughts		
	Coherence: logical progression of thoughts/ideas; linking words/transition signals used accurately and appropriately		
	Content		
Total=10	Essay addresses the question		
	Depth and range of ideas		
	Supporting points relevant to topic		
	Grammar & Vocabulary		
Total=10	Grammar – a variety of verb phrases used accurately and appropriately; a variety of sentence structures used accurately; accurate use of articles and plurals; correct punctuation, word		
	Vocabulary – accurate, appropriate, wide range, level of sophistication, formality, spelling		
		Total	/30
	Response to tutor's comments	Draft 2	
Total=10	Essay Structure and Content		
	Improvement in organization; clearer expansion of ideas		
Total=10	Grammar and Vocabulary		
	Correction of errors; improvement language use		
		Total	/20
		Percentage	%
Tutor:		Date:	
COMMENTS			

İngilizceyi yabancı dil olarak öğrenen öğrencilerin düzeltme sürecine yönelik yaklaşımı: Durum çalışması

Öz

İkinci dil öğrenenlere dönüt verme ile ilgili konular araştırmacıların ilgisini çekmektedir. Birçoğu etkili dönütün nasıl verildiğini merak etmektedir. Araştırmalar İngilizceyi ikinci dil ya da yabancı dil olarak öğrenen öğrenciler genellikle yüzeysel yani dil bilgisel ya da mekanik hatalara yönelik dönütlere odaklanmaktadır. Bazıları ise daha çok anlamsal yani anlam değişikliği, cümleye açıklık getirme ya da konu cümlesi ekleme gibi dönütlere odaklanmaktadır. Bu durum neden bazı öğrenciler yüzeysel hatalara odaklanırken diğerleri anlam ile ilgili hatalara odaklanmaktadır sorusunu akillara getirmektedir. Bu çalışmanın amacı 6 tane yüksek motivasyonlu İngilizceyi ikinci/ yabancı dil olarak öğrencinin metinlerini inceleyerek ve öğrencilerin kendi bakış açılarından doğrulayarak onların revizyon yaklaşımını ortaya çıkarmak için yapılmıştır. Bu çalışmada yapılandırılmış ve geriye dönük görüşmeler, öğrencilerin yazılı metinleri ve öğretmenin yazılı dönütü veri toplama aracı olarak kullanılmıştır. Öğrencilerin tekrar düzenlediği taslakları Faighly ve Witte'in (1981) yeniden gözden geçirme taksonomisi kullanılarak analiz edilmiştir. Öğrenciler aynı seviyede olmalarına rağmen yarısı (yerele odaklı öğrenciler) yüzeysel, diğer yarısı (genele odaklı öğrenciler) ise anlam ile ilgili dönütlere odaklanmıştır. Öğrencilerin genel ya da yerel odaklı olduklarını belirmek onlara verilen dönütün etkili olması açısından önemlidir. Bu konu ile ilgili gelecek araştırmalar yazılı dönütün veriliş şeklini geliştirmesinde etkili olabilir.

Anahtar sözcükler: Düzeltici dönüt; düzeltme süreci; İngilizceyi yabancı/ikinci dil olarak öğrenen öğrencilerin revizyon yaklaşımı; anlamsal ve yüzeysel değişiklikler; revizyon sürecinin taksonomisi

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